



April 2025

# THE EXTENSION CONNECTION

Wyandotte County K-State Research and Extension

## Director's Note

**Denise Dias**

Wyandotte County Director

April 1st may be April Fools Day, but the knowledge shared in our classes and workshops is no joke. Our staff is dedicated to helping you live your best life and will be out in the community. Don't miss this opportunity to learn something new and valuable.

Do you have a favorite group that would benefit from our classes? Scheduling a session is as easy as making a call. We're here to make it happen for you.

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# SPRING CLEANING: HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT TO CLEAN HERE?-

Many resources available will give you a list of things in your home to consider decluttering such as writing utensils that no longer work, piles of papers, old calendars, and magazines. Let's take a moment to focus on some things I bet you never thought to clean in your spring cleaning regimen. It's time to start talking about cleaning your schedule and your mind.

## A colorful illustration of various cleaning supplies. In the center is a blue rectangular container holding several items: a yellow broom with a red handle, a purple dustpan with a grey handle, a green bottle, a white bottle with an orange pump dispenser, and a red and white striped cloth. To the left of the blue container is a red bucket filled with white foam. To the right is a yellow bottle. In front of the blue container are several sponges in yellow, orange, and pink, and a small purple brush. The background is white.

# APRIL IS STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

Stress, we can't escape it. The difference between each one of us is how we cope with it. There are many factors that affect our ability to cope with stress in a healthy manner...time management, relaxation, talking with others, proper nutrition, limiting alcohol & nicotine, and sleep, just to name a few.

It's been said that sleep is a superpower. A lot happens while you are sleeping. Inadequate sleep directly affects your relationships, life expectancy, libido, cardiovascular health, and immune system and contributes to weight gain. Sleep is magical for our bodies.. Here are science-based ways to increase sleep and improve quality sleep:

1. Keep a regular sleep schedule. Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, including weekdays and weekends.
2. Drop the temperature. To initiate the sleep cycle, you need to drop your core body temperature 1 to 3 degrees. The ideal room temperature for sleep is 65 to 67 degrees F.
3. Sleep in a dark room. Reduce light exposure at least 30 minutes before going to bed.
4. Avoid blue light before bedtime. Do you reach for an electronic device or watch television just before going to bed? Blue light messes with your body's ability to prepare for sleep.
5. Get some exercise! The good news is that just 10 minutes of exercise per day will impact your sleep in a positive way.
6. Use your bed only for sleeping or lovemaking. Don't read or watch television in bed.

Last year Michelle Lane, RN, MSN, CMSRN, CHC, NE-BC, Senior Director, Community Wellness and Corporate Health at North Kansas City Hospital, presented a webinar for the K-State Research and Extension "Living Well Wednesday" series on this topic. She discussed what happens when you don't get enough sleep, tips to improve sleep, and offered ways to change your thought process about sleep so you can elevate your life through getting enough sleep

Watch the webinar, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjW0\\_HGq\\_mY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjW0_HGq_mY), and learn more about the fascinating way your brain works and how sleep provides a literal brain washing every night.

For additional information check out, <https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/index.html>. Here you'll find sleep tips, resources and more.

(Resource: Walk Kansas Newsletter, 2024 Week 3)



# DON'T BE FOOLED BY UFO

As the new month begins, I try to find my Unidentified Food Objects (UFO) in my kitchen. I am amazed by what I have seen since I last cleaned my kitchen deeply: from the can of tomatoes that was bulging on both ends. Yes, that went outside to the trash in multiple bags in case it exploded. Luckily, it did not. Then there is the food I knew we would not get to eat before it went bad. So, I sent it off into the freezer to never neverland in the freezer. It then turns into an unidentifiable frozen object because I forgot to label and date it

Freezing keeps food safe indefinitely, though quality may decline over time. Guidelines for freezer storage are for quality purposes only. Freezer burn, which appears as grayish-brown leathery spots, does not make food unsafe but can make it dry in spots. You can trim away freezer-burned parts before or after cooking, but if heavily affected, the food might be best used in soups or stews or discarded for quality reasons. For detailed storage times, refer to the refrigerator and freezer storage chart [here](#).

Most shelf-stable foods are safe indefinitely, even after their "best by" date. Packaged items like cereal or pasta are safe to eat but may become stale or develop an off flavor over time. Canned goods can last for years if the can is in good condition (no rust, dents, or swelling). Many dates refer to quality rather than safety, so you can assess quality when you open the package. [For detailed storage times, refer to the cupboard storage chart here.](#)



# Horticulture

# STARTING SEEDS AND GETTING TRANSPLANTS

## Containers for Seed Starting

- Trays with drainage
- Peat pots
- Recycled plastic cups

## Cleaning and Reusing Containers

- Wash with soap and water
- Sanitize with a bleach solution

## Choosing the Right Soil

- Use a sterile, soilless mix
- Avoid garden soil
- Pre-moisten before planting
- Add compost for a gentle fertilizer

## Understanding Light Needs

- 14-16 hours of light daily
- Keep grow lights 2-4 inches above seedlings up to 12-18 inches based on strength
- Windows can be a problem (Hot in the day, cold at night)

## What and When to Plant?

- KSRE MF315** - Vegetable Garden Planting Guide
- KSRE S51** - Kansas Garden Guide

## Germination Temperature

- Cool-season: 50-60°F
- Warm-season: 70-85°F
- Use heat mats if needed

## Watering Seedlings

- Keep soil evenly moist
- Can use bottom watering if using shallow trays
- Avoid overwatering!

## Transplant Timing

- Harden off before transplanting
- Avoid transplanting in extreme heat
- Direct sun at the height of the day is harsh

## Hardening Off Process

- Expose seedlings to outdoor conditions gradually
- Start with shade, increase sun exposure
- Bring inside at night early on

## Where to Get Seeds and Plants

**KCK Seed Library @ Schlagle Library**  
4051 West Dr. Kansas City, KS 66109  
Phone: 913.295.8250



# Community Development

## KANSAS HOUSING: UNLOCKING HOMES

Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC) program staff are planning visits to the six geographic regions of the state in March and April 2025. Staff will provide information on the following resources:

- Moderate Income Housing (MIH)
- Kansas Housing Investor Tax Credit (KHITC)
- Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)
- Home Loan Guarantee for Rural Kansas (HLG)
- First Time Homebuyer Program (FTHB)

These sessions are geared towards the following:

- Cities/counties
- Builders/developers
- Bankers
- Real Estate Agents
- Potential Homebuyers
- Nonprofit or Social Service Providers
- MIH, KHITC, and/or RLF applicants that were not awarded in prior rounds
- Individuals/organizations interested in applying in future MIH, KHITC, and/or RLF rounds.

If you are interested in applying for one or more of the resources listed above, we encourage you to register for the meeting in Topeka.

Regional Housing Development and Community Solutions Sessions

Topeka | Tuesday, April 15

10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library

Marvin Auditorium 101C

1515 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, KS

The registration link is [Here](#).



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# Upcoming Events



**April 2:** K-State Garden Hour

Methods to Increasing Vegetable Yield

**April 3:** Create Better Health

Nutrition Facts Label & Physical Activity Barriers

**April 5:** Container and Small Space Gardening

**April 10:** Create Better Health

Fruit, Vegetables & Aerobic Activity

**April 14:** Teen Cuisine

Watch out for added sugars

**April 17:** Create Better Health

Protein, Food Safety & Resistance Training

**April 19:** Pest and Disease Management in the Home Garden

**April 21:** Volunteer Appreciation Lunch

**April 21:** Teen Cuisine

Snack Attack

**April 24:** Create Better Health

Grains & Balance and Flexibility

**April 29:** Growing Tomatoes

K-State Research and Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means for communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may be requested by contacting the event contact Jo McLeland two weeks prior to the start of the event (insert deadline date) at (913-299-9300 or jo1@ksu.edu). Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.

Connect with us!



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